

## III. VIENNA ORIENTAL JOURNAL. Vol. xiv, Nos. 1, 2.

Lehmann (C. F.). Von der deutschen armenischen Expedition.

Böhtlingk (O.). Kritische Beiträge.

Winternitz (M.). Genesis des Mahābhārata.

Rhodokanakis (N.). Über zwei zu al-Madīna gesehene Sonnenfinsternisse.

Mahler (Ed.). Ueber zwei zu al-Madīna gesehene Sonnenfinsternisse.

Caland (W.). Ueber das Vaitānasūtra und die Stellung des Brahman im Vedischen Opfer.

Kühnert (F.). Zur Kenntniss der chinesischen Musik.

Müller (D. H.). Textkritische Glossen zu den Proverbien, Cap. 23 und 24.

## III. OBITUARY NOTICE.

*William Frederic Sinclair.*

We regret to have to record the death of Mr. W. F. Sinclair, late Bombay Civil Service, on the 15th of May, in his 52nd year.

He was the son of Mr. William Sinclair, D.L., of Holly Hill, County Tyrone, and, after education at the Armagh Royal School, was appointed to the Indian Civil Service in 1866, and arrived at Bombay in 1868. He served through the usual course of grades in the Civil Administrative Ranks, until he became a Senior Collector in 1890 and was appointed to Thana. After holding that post until 1894 he came home and retired. It was whilst acting as Collector and Forest Settlement Officer of the Kolaba District in the eighties that Mr. Sinclair probably did his best work. Here he was in his right place: fond of the sea and all that is in or upon it, an ardent naturalist and student of flora and fauna, and with a lively interest in the hardy seafaring people of the coast, he became more than is usually the case personified

with that district, and there seemed to be nothing about the people, their languages and customs, about the trees and the birds and fishes, of which he had not some, if not full, knowledge. Amongst sailors, European and native, his work in connection with the Alibag lifeboats was well known and appreciated.

Sir James M. Campbell, K.C.I.E., who knew him well, is good enough to send the following notes:—“When Mr. Sinclair was Collector of Kolaba, that is, the coast to the south of Bombay Harbour, the occurrence of more than one wreck showed that, in spite of the improved lighting of the entrance to Bombay, mistakes in dark stormy weather might still occur. The lifeboat and staff of Koli boatmen, which about twenty years before had more than once rendered good service, were maintained in little more than in name. Mr. Sinclair succeeded, mainly by gifts of his own and from his friends, in having an efficient lifeboat built and arrangements for the crew set in order. Mr. Sinclair was much attached to the Kolis, or local fishermen, whose skill and courage as seamen have been the admiration of most officers of the District who have been fond of the sea. With the help of the Kolis he worked at the subject of the salt-water fish of the District with such success as to send one of the best collections to the Fishery Exhibition in London. Besides of fish, Mr. Sinclair had a good knowledge of the animals, especially of the birds, of the parts of Western India in which he served. He was also fond of forest work, and was well acquainted with the forest trees of the Bombay Presidency.

“Place and personal names was a favourite study. On these subjects, and on caste and the daily life, religion, and customs of the Hindus of many portions of Western India, his knowledge was accurate and remarkable. On many of these subjects Mr. Sinclair contributed interesting and useful papers to the *Indian Antiquary* and other journals. Caves and old temples he studied with zeal, and made, perhaps, the most valuable district notes both for Khandesh and for Kolaba of the series which was afterwards embodied in the

'Lists of Antiquarian Remains in the Bombay Presidency,' compiled by Dr. J. Burgess. Mr. Sinclair's writings did much to increase the knowledge regarding the Hemādpanthi temples and the Ahir or Gauli dynasty of Khandesh. In writing, as in talk, Mr. Sinclair had a homely and humorous way of regarding all subjects which interested him. His style was clear and effective; and for a writer almost cut off from books he had an unusual command of slang or technique of many subjects on which he wrote."

In a notice of Mr. Sinclair in the *Times of India* the writer says: "He had two hobbies. One was the lifeboat which he was instrumental in providing for Alibag, and which has been a blessing to the seafaring population along the coast. The other—and no bad hobby either—was the people of his district. Mr. Sinclair might best be described as a survival into our own days of the district officer of an earlier generation, who was more at home amongst his people than amongst his office files, trusting them and winning their trust, and knowing them better and caring more for them than the loquacious politicians who called him an alien, and pretended that they alone understood the ryot and his wants. It seems but the other day that he was ruling the Kolaba and afterwards the Thana District with a benevolent despotism which the people liked more perhaps than the Government."

Mr. Sinclair became a member of our Society in 1877, and sent several communications to the Journal. Many will feel his loss as of one to whom they could refer for information on many subjects with certainty of a ready and useful reply.

During the last few months Mr. Sinclair was occupied much in translating and editing, in conjunction with Mr. Donald Ferguson, the "Travels of Pedro Teixeira" for the Hakluyt Society.

O. C.